

Index to Minutes of meeting
The Commission of Fine Arts
17 February 1956

Civilian Service Medal, Distinguished Department of the Navy	1
Civilian Service Medal, Meritorious Department of Defense	2
Decoration of Public Buildings, funds for draft legislation	2
Italy, Gift from the People of Sites for the "Discus Thrower"	1
Legislation, Draft To authorize funds for decoration of public bldgs.	2
National Association of Life Underwriters Preliminary Shipstead-Luce submission	2
Purchase of land at 22nd and C Streets Position of General Services Administration	2
Second Division Memorial World War II additions to	1
Shipstead-Luce Act Submission, preliminary National Association of Life Underwriters Bldg.	2
State Building, Department of Extension and remodeling	2

Minutes of the meeting of
The Commission of Fine Arts on
17 February 1956

The Commission met pursuant to notice at 9:15 o'clock, with David E. Finley, presiding. Present were:

David E. Finley, Chairman
Douglas W. Orr, Vice Chairman
Elbert Peets
Mrs. Emily Muir

L.R. Wilson, Secretary.

Department of the Interior, National Capital Parks
Second Division Memorial, addition to commemorating
World War II and Korean Conflict

Mr. Ralph O. Lundgren, Chairman of the Memorial Committee of the Second Division Association, appeared before the Commission with drawings, prepared by Eggers and Higgins, architects, of the design for an addition at each side of the Second Division Memorial to commemorate those members of the Second Division who died in World War II and the Korean Conflict. The members expressed the opinion that the design, was harmonious with the existing monument and it was approved as presented. Exhibit A.

Department of the Interior and the
Department of State

Gift of the People of Italy to the People of the United States
Replica of the "Discus Thrower".

The members considered possible sites on which to put the bronze statue, a replica of the "Discus Thrower", which was presented to the President by the President of Italy, as a gift from the people of Italy to the people of the United States. They agreed that it could suitably be placed in the small park directly east of 21st Street, ^{N.W.} directly across the street from the entrance to the Department of State building. The base of the statue would be parts of an ancient column from the Forum of Trajan. The other agencies involved also approved this location. Exhibits B, B-1

Department of Defense

Army Quartermaster Corps-Heraldic Branch

a. Navy Distinguished Civilian Service Medal

Mr. Arthur DuBois of the Heraldic Branch, presented a plaster model for a Navy Distinguished Civilian Service Medal. The members liked the design and approved it as presented. Exhibit C.

b. Department of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Medal.

Mr. DuBois also presented a plaster model of the Department of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Award Medal. The members approved the design as submitted. Exhibit D.

D.C. Government

Department of Licenses and Inspection

Preliminary Shipstead-Luce Application

National Association of Life Underwriters Building

The members conferred with the architects' representative with reference to the design for the headquarters building of the National Association of Life Underwriters to be located at 22nd and C Streets. At a previous meeting, the members had considered the scale of the building too small for the location and recommended changes. Without making the suggested changes, the design was resubmitted. The members were unwilling to approve the design as submitted. Exhibit E.

General Services Administration

Public Buildings Service

a. Draft of legislation authorizing funds for decoration of public buildings

The Chairman asked Mr. L.L. Hunter whether any progress had been made on legislation for getting funds allocated by the Congress for the decoration of public buildings. Mr. Hunter stated that he and the Secretary of the Commission of Fine Arts had formulated a preliminary draft of proposed legislation. He had asked the legal staff of the General Services Administration to study it, but the study was not yet completed. It was agreed that, as soon as a final draft could be made which would be acceptable to the Commission of Fine Arts and the General Services Administration, steps would be taken to have the legislation introduced jointly by the two agencies.

b. Review of the position of the General Services Administration on purchase of land at 22nd and C Streets

Mr. L.L. Hunter and Mr. Fred Poorman of the Public Buildings Service met with the Commission, and Mr. Poorman told the members of the plans that the General Services Administration had for the new Federal building program to provide space for 32,000 government employees in permanent quarters. The members were interested to hear of these plans and stated they would be glad to see the designs for the buildings as they are developed.

c. Department of State Building-Extension and Remodeling

The Public Buildings Service presented to the Commission of Fine Arts a model showing the general area for the proposed extension to the present building housing the Department of State on Virginia Avenue at 21st Street, N.W. The building would extend west to 23rd Street and south to C Street, N.W., and would occupy the entire property and surround two interior courts.

The Commission approved the general concept of the building. The members noted that it would integrate a larger new unit with the smaller existing building at 21st and E Streets, N.W., and would occupy all of two city squares, necessitating the closing of 22nd Street between C and E Streets, N.W. The members had some reservations about the massive appearance of the building mass, but they felt that the location of the main entrance on the south facade of the new building would present an opportunity for a monumental approach through C Street from Constitution Avenue. Exhibit F.

Meeting adjourned at 12 o'clock noon.

L.R. Wilson

L.R. Wilson, Secretary

17 April 61

26 March 1956

Mr. Ralph O. Lundgren, Chairman
Memorial Committee
Second Division Association
2509-39th Street, N. W.
Washington 7, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lundgren:

At their meeting on 17 February 1956, the members of the Commission of Fine Arts were glad to see further developments of the World War II addition which Eggers and Higgins, architects of New York, designed for the Second Division Memorial, on Constitution Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D. C.

The design was approved as presented in the architect's perspective drawing. The drawing of the plan and elevation, which you submitted later on 19 March 1956, has been made a part of the record. The Commission will be glad to confer with you on further details as the work progresses.

By direction of the Chairman:


Linton R. Wilson
Secretary

Hotel Washington
Washington, D. C.
March 3, 1956

Mr. David Finley
Director, National Gallery of Art
National Gallery of Art
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Finley:

I should like to express my own sincere thanks and those of the Italian Government for all you have done to make the gift of the Discus Thrower a great success, particularly for the decision to place the monument in the square in front of the State Department.

In regard to the history of the archaeological pieces I wish to inform you in confidence that the column and the capital come from the surroundings of the Foro Triano, and that the travertine of the base of the statute was cut from an enormous piece which also was located in the archaeological excavations of Rome. The origin of this particular piece is not known, as it was obtained from a deposit of demolished medieval architecture.

The anterior inscription "Al Popolo Degli Stati Uniti Gli Italiani" commemorates the date of the presentation by the President of the Italian Republic. The posterior inscription "Signum Signum Iustitiae Resitutae 28 February 1948" commemorates the date of the memorandum from the U. S. Military Government in Germany, under the signature of Ambassador Murphy, which was sent on the 28th of February 1948 to the Italian Diplomatic Mission. With this document, which was a thing apart from the Peace Treaty, the new policy of the United States Government in regard to the restoration of art treasures to Italy was established.

This date represents for Italy the restoration of her artistic and cultural heritage which was illegally seized by the Nazis.

RECEIVED
THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

MAR 8 1956

NOTED.....

Page 2 -

Any further information in which you may be interested you may obtain from my office in Rome, which is always at your disposition.

I should like to take the opportunity to express again the gratitude of Italy and my own personal and sincere thanks.

Very sincerely yours,

Rodolfo Siviero

MEMORANDUM

The bronze reproduction of the "Discus Thrower" was cast by the Bearzi Foundry in Florence. It was deemed preferable to reproduce the masterpiece in bronze because the lost original one of Mirone was made of this metal.

In order to make a reproduction of the original as close as possible, the peg supporting the left leg of the marble statue returned to Italy by the U. S. Military Government in Germany (now in the National Museum of Rome) was eliminated in the bronze statue.

After the casting, the bronze was entirely chased as it was done during the Renaissance. This work, which required six months, was made by specialized Florentine craftsmen. Both the founder Bearzi and the two embasers refused to be paid and accepted only the reimbursement of costs, because they knew that the statue was going to be donated to the United States as a token of gratitude for the return to Italy of the masterpieces carried away from Italy by the Germans during the war.

After the chasing was completed, the bronze statue was made to have a natural finish by burying it in the soil for five months and keeping it for six months thereafter in the open air. Thus the statue was covered with a permanent finish similar to that of antique bronzes.

The City of Rome contributed to this donation by offering a pillar of African gray granite topped by a white marble capital. They were both found in the archeological excavations in Rome. The base of the statue is of Roman travertine and has on its front side an inscription in Roman capital characters which reads: "AL COMITATO DELL' STATI UNITI D'ITALIA". On one side there is the date of the visit of the President of Italy to the United States of America.

Il Capo della Delegazione
per le Prestituzioni

PECO DEL MONUMENTO

Quantal : 220.4 lbs

Discebole:	4.11	1	= 220.4
Capitello:	"	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	= 991.8
Colonna :	"	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	= 2975.4
1°)	"	5	= 1102.0
Gradini :			
2°)	"	19	= 4187.6
TOTALE	4.11	43	= 9477.2

NOTED

FEB 8 1922
WASHINGTON, D. C.
THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
RECEIVED

March 12, 1956

Ref: QMGRD-H 421.4

Dear Colonel Cook:

The members of the Commission of Fine Arts were glad to have Mr. Arthur E. DuBois, Technical Director, and Mr. Thomas Hudson Jones, Sculptor, present the plaster model of the Department of the Navy Distinguished Civilian Service Award Medal at the meeting of the Commission on February 17, 1956. The photographs of the models received March 12, 1956, have been made a part of the record.

The Commission approved the design as presented.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Lt. Col. James S. Cook, Jr.
Chief, Heraldic Branch
Quartermaster General
Department of the Army
Washington 25, D. C.

March 12, 1956

Ref: QMGRD-H 421.4

Dear Colonel Cook:

The members of the Commission of Fine Arts were glad to have Mr. Arthur E. DuBois, Technical Director, and Mr. Thomas Hudson Jones, Sculptor, present the plaster model of the Department of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Award Medal at the meeting of the Commission on February 17, 1956. The photographs of the models received March 12, 1956, have been made a part of the record.

The Commission approved the design as presented.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

William H. Hays
Chairman

Lt. Col. James E. Cook, Jr.
Chief, Records Branch
Quartermaster General
Department of the Army
Washington, D. C.

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
7000 INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

February 20, 1956

Dear Mr. Wilson:

At a meeting on 17 February 1956, the Commission of Fine Arts conferred with Mr. John Campbell, of your office, with reference to the design for the National Association of Life Underwriter's headquarters building located on property at 22nd and C Streets, N. W. The Commission also, as you know, conferred previously with representatives of your firm on May 5, 1955, and January 11, 1956.

On each of these occasions we pointed out, and would like to reiterate at this time, the fact that the scale of the building appeared to the Commission to be much too small for its location among the buildings which will immediately surround it. It was our understanding that consideration would be given to our comments while the preliminary drawings were in the process of study. The second submission, in general, did not show any further consideration of the scale, and, at that time, we again called this fact to your representative's attention. In his letter to you of February 10, 1956, the Secretary summed up the Commission's recommendations regarding the scale of the building, as you requested.

Now the working drawings have been submitted, with no change in the design, to us officially by the Commissioners of the District of Columbia for our advice on the appearance of the building before they issue a building permit. We believe that before a recommendation for a permit can be made, further consideration should be given to this matter. We are of the opinion that the differences in scale of your design in relation to the existing buildings, and particularly to the projected State Department addition directly across the street, will be very marked.

Mr. Campbell will doubtless acquaint you in more detail with his discussion with the Commission.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Mr. H. B. Wilson, Jr.
Pereira and Luckman
9220 Sunset Boulevard
Los Angeles 46, California

26 March 1956

Mr. Fred S. Poorman
Deputy Commissioner
Public Buildings Service
General Services Administration
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Poorman:

The members of the Commission of Fine Arts were glad to see, at their meeting on 17 February 1956, the early stages of the plans which are being prepared for the complex of buildings for the use of the Department of State, between C and E Streets, and 21st and 23rd Streets, Northwest. At this meeting the associated architects were represented by Mr. Marvin Probst and Mr. T. Clifford Neenan of Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, Chicago, Illinois; and by Mr. Frederick M. Harley, and Mr. Malcolm R. Stirton of Harley, Ellington and Day, of Detroit, Michigan. Mr. L. L. Hunter, Supervising Architect, Mr. Phil Wilson, architect, and yourself represented the Public Buildings Service, and Mr. Nelson A. Kenworthy, consultant, represented the Department of State.

The copies of drawings received at the Commission's offices on 8 March 1956, have been made part of the record. The Commission approved, in principle, the plans as presented. Special note was taken of locating the main entrance of the building at 22nd and C Streets, thus providing the possibility of a monumental vista from Constitution Avenue. However, the present intention of the National Association of Life Underwriters to erect a headquarters building on the lot at the southwest corner, 22nd and C Streets, will seriously hamper the realization of this aim, and we believe steps should be taken to revive a plan of last year to purchase additional land to locate the National Association of Life Underwriters building to the west in the middle of the block.

We will be glad to confer with you as to the progress of the State Department plans at the next meeting of the Commission at 10:00 a. m., on the morning of April 6.

By direction of the Chairman:


L. R. Wilson
Secretary

